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Thesis

THE CHRISTIAN ASPECT OF BERGSON'S PHILOSOPHY

Submitted by

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Bergen, Henri Louis, 1869 -

THE CHRISTIAN ASPECT OF BERGSON'S PHILOSOPHY

Christianity is destined to be the world's religion. But in the realization of that destiny Christianity has met stubborn resistance.

From Jesus to Bergson materialism has strongly opposed Christianity.

The struggle between Christianity and Materialism:

Jesus and the Sadducees.

In the discussion Jesus implied the validity of the soul's experience.

Christianity and Epicurean philosophy.

Epicurean philosophy practically anti-theistic.

Christianity and Stoicism.

Stoicism a system that identifies God and matter.

In the Third century the tide turned toward spiritual values.

The work of Plotinus.

Christianity adopted as the religion of the Empire.

Little materialistic thought during the Middle Ages.

Ecclesiasticism and Scholasticism.

The revival of Materialism in the Seventeenth century.

The work of Gassendi, DrsCartes, Hobbes, and Bacon gave impetus to this movement.

In France the movement was carried to the extreme of atheism.

Resulted in lower morals.

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the following method of finding the area of a polygon.

Let us suppose a polygon of n sides, each of which is divided into two parts by a diagonal drawn from one vertex to another. Then the area of the polygon will be equal to the sum of the areas of all the triangles formed by these diagonals.

Now let us consider a polygon of n sides, and let us draw a diagonal from one vertex to another.

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Influence of atheism on the Revolution.

Reaction against atheism and development of idealism.

Renaissance of materialistic thought in the latter half of the Nineteenth century.

Causes:

Excess of idealism.

Development of the physical sciences.

Detrimental to religion and morals.

Besides this theoretical materialism there is a practical materialism.

The spirit that centers in things rather than in spiritual truth.

The commercial spirit.

Love of display.

The pleasure spirit.

This spirit of materialism, theoretical and practical, has hindered the progress of Christianity. Bergson meets the need.

The Philosophy of Bergson:

Here follows a brief review of Bergson's Philosophy, touching especially on those points which seem related to Christianity and to life. The purpose being to establish a basis for comparison with Christianity and a means for estimating its value.

His idea of reality.

and that of all the species of mammals
in existence, the monkey comes nearest
to man in intelligence.

But such does not equally mean that man
is the only animal that has reason.
Reason is found
in certain insects and in some birds,
which are called the "thinking
creatures." These animals, however,
are not capable of reason, but of instinct,
which is the power of doing
certain acts without thinking.
Thus, the ant, which is
a very simple animal,
will always go to the same place
at the same time every day, without
thinking where it is going or what it is
going to do.

Man, however, is not like the ant;
he thinks before he acts, and
therefore he is called the "thinking
creature."

His theory of knowledge.

Life as Creative Evolution.

The universe as Creative Evolution.

Bergson's philosophy and Christianity.

God:

The leading philosophers' idea of God.

The Christian's idea of God.

Bergson's idea of God.

He is unceasing life, action, freedom.

He is the Creative Force, always changing,
always experimenting, constantly realizing
himself more and more.

The question of the personality of Bergson's God.

The antinomy of God's absolutism and man's
freedom disappears under Bergson's view.

Intelligence and Instinct.

Evolution not in a straight line through vegetative,
animal instinct and human reason, but the creative
movement has split up and has evolved through three
distinct lines, -- vegetative, instinctive, rational.

The field of intellect is matter.

Its reports are valid in its field.

The field of instinct is life.

Its reports are valid in its field.

This distinction between intelligence and instinct has

value for religion. for religion is life, and, according to this view the intellect cannot despise the impulses of the soul when their validity is not logically demonstrated.

The doctrine of God has been a stumbling-block to intellectualism, for it could not be logically proved.

The intuition demands a God, and its voice is authoritative.

The question of immortality.

Many arguments for immortality.

All such arguments fall short of proof.

The intellectualist would therefore deny it.

But the soul demands immortality.

The doctrine has value for life.

Paul's estimate of the doctrine.

The opinions of Seeley, Renan, Romanes.

If the Doctrine has such value for life, and instinctively humanity demands it, we should accept it.

Bergson's doctrine of creative freedom.

The mechanical theory of Creation.

The finalistic theory.

In neither of these is there freedom.

Bergson's doctrine is a doctrine of freedom, of optimism, of hope, of inspiration to Christian faith.

and the 2nd consideration is that the PPS are often
not sufficiently good for their intended purpose.

For example, it is well known that the PPS of the

standardized normal distribution

are not particularly good for small sample sizes.

It is also well known that the PPS of the gamma

distribution

are not particularly good for small sample sizes.

It is also well known that

the PPS of the standard normal distribution

are not particularly good for small sample sizes.

It is also well known that the PPS of the standard

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THE CHRISTIAN ASPECT OF BERGSON'S PHILOSOPHY.

One day while conducting the class in Comparative Religions at Boston University School of Theology Dr. W. F. Warren, who always refers to Christianity as the world religion, was asked by a student in what sense he regarded Christianity as the world religion.

Quickly the Doctor replied, "Both in adaptation and in destination." And he spoke the faith that was in him, which is also the faith of the intelligent Christian world.

But in the progressive realization of that destiny there has been from the beginning a stubborn resistance. The struggle has been largely between spirituality on the one hand and on the other materiality manifesting itself now in one form and now in another. The conflict began when Jesus met the Sadducees on the question of the resurrection, and it continues today as the church, in the field of religion, and Eucken and Bergson, in the field of philosophy, assail with telling effect the intrenched forces of material philosophy. And as in the beginning Jesus silenced the Sadducee, so these modern spiritual thinkers are having the better of the argument with the advocates of a mechanical universe. And that type of philosophy which identifies matter and spirit, soul and body, makes thought only a manifestation of matter, and leaves no place for immortality in a dead and dying universe, is being shorn of its power to depress and paralyze the spiritual aspirations of man. And as a result, Christianity will make the more rapid progress in accomplishing its destiny as the world religion.

To understand the probable influence of Bergson on Christianity it will be helpful to review the historic struggle between Christianity and materialism.

When Jesus was laying the foundations of the Christian religion he laid stress upon the spiritual nature of man and God, upon God's providence, the resurrection, and the immortality of the soul. A crude materialism met the advent of the new spiritual philosophy at the threshold and challenged its authority. It was the Sadducees, who said that there was no resurrection (Matt. 22:23) neither angel nor spirit (Acts 23:8), who denied the providence of God and the "immortal duration of the soul" (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Bk. II 8:14) that thus took issue with Jesus. In reply to their arguments Jesus excused their materialism on the grounds of ignorance of the Scriptures and of the power of God. His answer was significant, for it not only rendered speechless his opponents, but it implied the possibility of getting nearer to truth and reality through the soul's experience than through the logical understanding.

In the early centuries Christianity had to meet the materialistic influence of the Epicurean philosophy. Lucretius, the chief exponent of Epicureanism, the man who more than any one else organized the rather loose and incoherent teachings of Epicurus into a system, died only fifty-five years before Christ. And this unspiritual conception of life had permeated the Greek world during the early history of the church. While Epicureanism is not wholly anti-theistic in theory, it is thoroughly anti-theistic on its practical side. While there are doubtless gods, they have no inter-

est and no practical relationship to man. Man's soul is so related to his body that the dissolution of the body means the dissolution of the soul; thus the hope and fear of immortality are groundless, and men should disabuse their minds of all thoughts of immortality, and deliver their souls from all fear of death.

Stoicism, which existed in its Roman form during the first and second centuries, while ethically sounder and more valuable as a philosophy than Epicureanism, yet as a philosophy, or at least in its metaphysics, it had little in common with Christianity. The Stoic philosophy was a kind of materialistic pantheism. All reality is material. The soul itself is corporeal, and each individual soul a part of the world soul, which, after a period of individuality is reabsorbed into the world-soul; the whole system passing through infinite cycles of differentiation and absorption. A system which thus identifies God and Matter and has no place for individual immortality furnished a poor field for Christian progress.

During the first two centuries of the Christian era the religious spirit suffered violence at the hands of these worldly-wise philosophies. The sovereignty of the intellect was recognized and the impulses of the soul were stifled and the voices of the heart were silenced. But such a period of spiritual depression could not last. A reaction set in, and during the third century there was a turning again to spiritual values, and a period of religious speculation began. Under Plotinus this new interest in religion and the spiritual conception of life was given impetus. The value of the inner life, the validity of the emotional, was recognized. This

period emphasized the importance of the individual, and recognized the essential nature of morals and religion. In these particulars it prepared the way for the reception of Christianity into higher circles and made possible its adoption as the religion of the Empire soon after.

It was easier for Christianity to extend itself in the middle ages because there was little if any materialistic speculation. Christianity was accepted by the thinkers of that age, and the doctrines of that faith occupied the minds of scholars. The clash of intellects was not on the question of a material or a spiritual universe but on the nature and the purpose of the spiritual creator of the universe and his present relationship to the world. Theistic thought dominated the whole of the mediaeval period. Between ecclesiasticism and scholasticism materialism was silenced. But with the breaking up of scholasticism and the overthrow of ecclesiasticism there was a renaissance of material philosophy. The revival of materialism began in the seventeenth century. Gassendi and DesCartes, in France, and Hobbes and Bacon, in England, gave impetus to the movement. Neither of these men was a thoroughgoing materialist, as each believed in a creative agent, and most of them held to their Christian faith; but something of the influence of even such semi-materialism as these men proclaimed is seen in the low moral life in that period of French and English history. It is impossible to undermine the positive spiritual faith of the people, or to cast any shadow of doubt upon the spiritual values of life or the immortality of the soul, without pushing the moral

and the other, provided with a small and narrow window
which was open like a trap door, so that it could be closed with
one hand. It had a small table and chair, and a small washstand
and a washbowl, all the necessary articles for washing and for
the preparation of the meal. The room was dark and
had no light, but there was a small lamp on the washstand
which gave out a feeble light, and which was the only light
in the room. The room was very small and had only one
bed, which was made of straw and was very uncomfortable.
The room was very dirty and had a strong smell of
dust and dirt. The walls were made of wood and
the floor was made of earth. The room was very
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life of the people to a lower level. It remained for France to carry materialism to the extreme of atheism; and even there it was an evolution. Voltaire, while opposing Christianity, disclaimed atheism. Rousseau would have nothing to do with atheism, but from Rousseau, Voltaire and Condillac it was but a step to atheism; and this step was taken by Le Mettrie, Diderot, Von Holbach, Lalande and others. These men reached the extreme and untenable conception of an absolutely material universe. "There is no God, there is no soul, there is nothing in the universe which may not be resolved into matter or motion." Such atheism had an immediate effect upon the morals of its advocates. Sensuous pleasure was the chief good of life, self-love about the only motive. If men are only as the beasts they will live about as the beasts live, and the principle of beastial life is selfishness. We would therefore look for an indifferent type of morals in the lives of these atheistic materialists, and we are not disappointed for, impurity, licentiousness, and untruthfulness characterize many of these earlier advocates of a soulless universe. This immoral and irreligious infection spread to the masses, and there was a rapid decline in morals and moral responsibility. The outcome were the excesses, atrocities and abandon of the Revolution. It would be unfair, probably, to attribute the Revolution directly and entirely to the teaching of these atheists, but it would be unhistorical to release this school of philosophers from responsibility in large measure for the selfishness and inhumanity of the Revolution. For nearly two centuries the morals and religion of France have suffered at the hands of material philosophy,

and the deplorable immoral and unchristian character of France today is due largely to the atheistic character of her earlier philosophers.

The extreme type of materialism which prevailed during the Revolution period did not continue long. A reaction set in, and under the leadership of such idealists as Goethe, Schelling, Fichte and Hegel the ungodly and unchristian philosophy of La Mettrie and Von Holbach rapidly loosened its hold on the lives of the people. But the respite was of short duration, for before the middle of the nineteenth century the revival of materialism was fully under way. Two general reasons might be given for this revival: The first was the excesses of idealism. Under Hegel idealism was pushed to such extremes as to bring it into disrepute. In trying to make practical his ideas the people were disappointed, and their dissatisfaction turned them back to a more realistic view of life and things. Our experience, after all, is rather closely related to things of the senses, and, as Dr. Bowne says, our experience is real to us, and it will not do to push our idealism so far as to discredit our real experience, for experience will assert itself even at the expense of philosophy and religion. The other reason for the return to materialism was the rapid development of the physical sciences. The nineteenth century has been supremely the century of science. Natural law is traced through all things, and all material phenomena in earth and sky are determined by law, and every fact of nature may be regarded as either cause or effect. The working hypothesis of these materialistic scientists is that a fact shown to be the result of law is thereby fully explained, and

that the law itself needs no explanation. The more generally the facts of nature are seen to be controlled by law the less the need of any external influence to explain these facts; the more law the less God; and according to Comte we shall sooner or later be able to take God to the frontier and bow him out with thanks. Comte, Mill, Darwin, Spencer, Haeckel, have been among the modern leaders of material thought; while positivism, mechanical evolutionism and pantheism have been the leading systems of modern material philosophy. As these anti-spiritual theories of the world and life have filtered down through society, even down to the uneducated masses, they have tended to stifle religious impulse and destroy the influence of the supernatural. When belief in the supernatural and the spiritual is weakened, then morals decay and religion fails to impress. Belief in God and in the spiritual nature of man and in the immortality of the soul acts as a strong safe-guard to the common good. It creates a fear that restrains or a faith that aspires, and in either case braces the moral tone of life and holds it to a higher level. And when that support is removed, as it is removed by the ascendancy of materialism, the tendency of life is inevitably downwards, and humanity approximates the animal world.

Practical materialism: There is, besides this materialism of the schools, a practical materialism that opposes Christianity at every point. It affects not only theoretical materialists but also theoretical theists. It is life rather than theory, and is manifest in every age. It is the spirit that centers interest in things rather than in spiritual truth. It is the commercial

spirit that puts gain above honesty and success above duty, whose emblem is the dollar sign and whose goal is wealth. It is the pleasure-loving spirit that will be satisfied even at the cost of higher virtues; the yielding to the dominion of the sensual rather than to the spiritual. It is the love of display that manifests itself in barbarous and inexcusable extravagance. In bondage to the world, ruled by the flesh, on good terms with the devil, the people lose sight of spiritual values. To a people obsessed with the spirit of practical materialism Christianity with its high spirituality makes little appeal.

Materialism, theoretical and practical, has beset the pathway of Christianity with many a difficulty and hindered its progress. Against such unspiritual philosophies and practices men like Bowne, Eucken and Bergson have set in motion a strong spiritual current which bids fair to turn back the tide of materialism and bring about a condition more favorable to the extension of the Christian religion.

Our study of Bergson from the Christian viewpoint is doubtless a little premature, for he has not spoken specifically on religion as yet, but has in course of preparation a book which will give his conception of God and religion. So, in working out the present paper we are limited to a study of his published works, which are exclusively philosophical. The list includes (translations) "Time and Free Will", "Matter and Memory", "Creative Evolution", and one or two other books of minor importance. Creative Evolution is his most important published work, and contains largely his system.

It is usual when beginning the study of a philosopher to classify him: is he realist or idealist? When thinking of his opposition to the materialist by giving to the world a spiritual nature and interpreting the universe in spiritual terms we think of Bergson as an idealist. But when we remember that he holds to the possibility and the fact of the immediacy of knowledge of things by direct vision or intuition of reality instead of through a medium of appearances we are inclined to think of him as a realist. But when we get to the center of his philosophy we find that the terms ideal and real lose their significance, or at least become but partial aspects of a greater truth. From the early mediaeval period until recent times philosophy has been of the scholastic or intellectualistic type; every theory, idea and aspiration was tested in the crucible of logic. Because life, spirit, reality could not be enclosed in a syllogism the philosopher was driven to skepticism. Then came the pragmatist with his "workable" theories of truth and sought to depose the logical and set up the practical as the sovereign way to truth and reality. But while the intellectualist failed to satisfy life, the pragmatist failed to satisfy the intellect. The difference between these two schools, of course, lies in the difference in their conceptions of the absolute--the intellectualist holding that intellect is absolute and the pragmatist that life is absolute. The real difficulty will be seen to lie in the problem of knowledge, or the relation of mind to matter. There are three historical theories as to the relation between the mind which knows and the things it knows: (1) That the mind

is affected by things, or the tabula rasa theory of the sensationalist; (2) That the mind constitutes its own knowledge, or gives its constitution to things, as per Kant; (3) That there is a pre-established harmony between mind and things, as per Leibnitz. But Bergson comes out with a new theory, which is, that there is a creative movement, the evolution of life, producing the intellect which gives its form to knowledge, and that the very same movement has produced the materiality which gives to things their power of being known. The correspondence between mind and things is thus seen to be a natural one, for it is one and the same movement which has given rise to the intellect which knows and to the things which are known. In Bergson's universe, then, we have not only mind and matter, but that which is back of both and overflows and explains both--reality itself. This reality is the "elan vital," the life urge or impetus. This elan vital is the force or principle of his "Creative Evolution!" Bergson breaks with the materialist or the physicist not in the legitimate field of physics, but when the physicist steps out of the bounds of the physical and endeavors to interpret the whole of reality in physical terms. And his reason is that the reality which we know best and with which we are most intimately related is a reality which physical science can neither explain nor comprehend. That reality is life. Physical science has to do with material things of the senses, the world which we know, or which lies within the possibility of our knowledge. In this field of things science is at home, and its rights and findings must be

and the first time I have seen it. It is a very large tree, and the trunk is
about 10 feet in diameter. The bark is smooth and greyish-white, with
some small lenticels. The leaves are large, elliptical, and pointed at the
tip, with serrated edges. The flowers are small, white, and bell-shaped,
with five petals. The fruit is a small, round, yellowish-orange drupe.
The tree is growing in a clearing in a forest, and there are other trees
of the same species nearby. The bark has a distinctively smooth
texture, and the leaves are large and deeply lobed. The flowers are
small and white, and the fruit is a small, round, yellowish-orange drupe.
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respected. But the scientist seems prone to enter the field of metaphysics, or at least, if he denies metaphysics, to comprehend all reality. His objective is to demonstrate the universe as a complete and perfect mechanism, each state of which explains every other state. He conceives a world in which action and re-action are completely balanced, in which no new fact, no real creation, no actual freedom is possible. To physical science movement, change, becoming, are apparent, not real. Movement is only alteration in a space that is motionless; change is but a rearrangement of parts that are themselves unchangeable; becoming is a fixed relation between an effect and its antecedent condition. A material thing, then, when known in all its relations is completely comprehended for all time.

Now life, says Bergson, is very different from all this. A living thing changes constantly, not only apparently, but in reality. Time is of its very essence. Life is an activity, but it is not like the activities with which physical science deals. There is no standard by which it can be measured: it obeys no law of conservation or of dissipation of energy. It is continual creation, continual becoming. We can work this out in our own experience: We are warm or we are cold, we are active or at rest, we are in good health / we suffer with disease; now ordinarily we regard the change as taking place in the passage from one state to another, but that the states persist until another change shall usher in another state. But the truth of the matter is that change is constant. Let us use Bergson's own illustration of this statement:"Let us

take the most stable of external states, the visual perception of a motionless external object. The object may remain the same, I may look at it from the same side, at the same angle, in the same light, nevertheless the vision I now have of it differs from that I have just had, even if only it is an instant older than the other. My memory is there, which conveys something of the past into the present. My mental state as it advances on the road of time is continually swelling with the duration which it accumulates: It goes on increasing--rolling upon itself as a snow-ball on the snow. Still more is this the case with states more deeply internal, such as sensations, feelings, desires etc., which do not correspond, like a simple visual perception, to an unvarying external object. But it is expedient to disregard this uninterrupted change, and to notice it only when it becomes sufficient to impress a new attitude on the body, a new direction on the attention. Then, and then only, we find our state has changed. The truth is that we change without ceasing, and that the state itself is nothing but change." This constant change is life, duration, reality. Now because life is change, and at each moment is something different than it can possibly be at any other moment, past or future, every moment of life is a new creation. Life, then, is creative evolution.

Bergson applies this same line of argument to the universe as a whole. In dealing with matter we isolate objects or systems from the general whole for convenience. Physical science, even, does not go to the end and isolate completely, but only for the

convenience of study. In themselves these objects or systems may be discontinuous and changeless; that is, changeless except as to displacement of parts; and as these parts may be reassembled in the same state as often as they see fit, the group does not grow old, it has no history, it does not change. But if we carry these isolated parts through their various relationships--the world, the solar system, the universe--we must come to that which endures--the whole, carrying all of its past into the present, pressing into the future, moving, changing, creating, maturing. Thus even as a living thing the universe is in constant flux and its movement is a creative evolution.

Reasoning along this line Bergson works out his philosophy. The principle or force that works at the center he calls the "elan vital" or the life impetus. This elan vital has been from the beginning seeking to realize itself more and more fully, just as through life man seeks to realize himself more fully. This evolution, or creative movement, has taken place not in a straight line, but in the form of a sheaf, taking divergent directions, among which its impetus is divided. We may get a notion of his meaning here, he says, by studying the development of our own characters. "Each of us glancing backwards over our history will find that our child personality, though indivisible, united in itself divers persons, which could remain blended just because they were in their nascent state. This indecision, so charged with promise, is one of the greatest charms of childhood; but these interwoven personalities

and the country's problems could be solved if it could be given more
and better weapons and more time had been given the war department
and the administration to provide what we give them or else
we would have to go to the next election and the next election will
be held in November of 1940. I am very right in my judgment and
I am sure all Americans will be with me and share my judgment.
Secretary Stark says the men from Congress and the Senate
are unanimous in their view that we must take action at once
in regard to our defense and that we will not be able to
have a successful campaign if we do not take action at once.
I am sure you know that the men from Congress and the Senate
are unanimous in their view that we must take action at once
in regard to our defense and that we will not be able to
have a successful campaign if we do not take action at once.
I am sure you know that the men from Congress and the Senate
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become incompatible in course of growth, and, as each of us can live but one life, a choice must per force be made. We choose, in reality, without ceasing; also we abandon many things. The route we pursue in time is strewn with the remains of all that we began to be, of all that we might have become." The individual, because of his limitation, must choose and must abandon; but nature has no such limitation, but has an incalculable number of lives at her disposal and is not under the necessity of making any such sacrifices, but continues the diverse lines or off-shoots of the creative movement and permits them to evolve separately, and we have a world of varied life and organism. This creative movement is upward, but in its upward movement it meets matter in a descending scale, and the conflict of the ages is on. The life force is the vital impetus persisting, pushing itself upward, taking hold of matter, molding it, subjecting it to its needs; but now and then, finding no pass through the impregnable wall, is turned back upon itself, eddying permanently in vegetism. At another place it pushes farther up through the descending mass, but is again stopped and turned in upon itself, eddying permanently in animal life with movement and instinct; but at one point this living force has been able to overcome all resistance and project itself through matter into a state of consciousness, and humanity emerges, the highest and perhaps the final realization of the life force, with potentialities that will doubtless triumph over all resistance and obtain absolute freedom.

GOD: To Plato God was the Father and the Creator of the uni-

verse, the absolutely immutable and simple Being, from whom all unchangeableness and simplicity and all truth are derived. But a being apart from man and difficult to find. To Aristotle God is pure Form, pure Idea, pure Intelligence, himself unmoved, but the source of all motion and the origin of all reason, but who has no further relationship to the world. To Spinoza God is the ground of Reality, the one original substance manifesting itself in Thought and Extension. He is the immanent cause of all things. Not providential nor concerned with man. The Christian God is the Creator of all things, the source of all life, and the ruler of the universe. He is immanent in all things, yet transcendent over all. He is Spirit and Life. He is from everlasting to everlasting, complete, eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, ever working to accomplish his eternal purposes.

The God of Bergson differs from all this. God is the Elan Vital, the Vital Impulse, or Impetus, the creative force always moving, always changing, always experimenting, constantly realizing himself more and more. In the words of a reviewer: "We are asked to regard God as a vast experimenter working in the cosmic laboratory as a creative force, struggling against the intractability of inert matter, and triumphing by subtlety and persistence." Quoting Bergson himself: "God thus defined has nothing of the already-made. He is unceasing life, action, freedom." He is a developing God, growing and realising himself by his experience, even as a man grows and realizes himself more and more by his experience. He has no plan conceived from eternity which he is working out. There is no final-

ism in the universe; but working and experimenting, succeeding and failing, growing, progressing, expanding, God advances, more and more realizing himself.

The question is raised as to the personality of Bergson's God. Is it not mere blind force, unconsciously at work, carrying all things in its onward sweep? The questioner may be excused for his misgivings on this point; for there is a vagueness in his presentation of God which makes it difficult for the reader to arrive at any clear conception of his meaning. This fault will in all probability be remedied when he publishes his book on religion. But there is no real reason yet for denying personality to the elan vital, the force at work in Creative Evolution. The denial of finality to this force is not equivalent to denying its personality. Personality implies purpose, but purpose is not identical with clearly defined ends. A man may be possessed of a great purpose without having his plans clearly laid for its accomplishment; and even the plans he may have laid must needs be changed because of unforeseen difficulties, or because by experience he has learned a better way. One may have in mind the writing of a book, and he has a conception of what he wants to put in the book, but as he proceeds new thoughts develop and new plans present themselves and new difficulties arise, and when finally his work is completed he has accomplished his purpose and the product is greater than the conception, for it contains the original conception with all the experience involved in the process of its realization added. An artist may purpose to paint a picture, and he has a more or less clearly de-

fined mental picture which he desires to transfer to the canvas, but as he proceeds with his work the image changes, features are eliminated and others are added, colors moderate, shadows deepen, every moment of his experience making its impress upon the work of his hands, until when the picture is finished it is all that he was when he began plus what he became while he wrought upon it. But we will not deny purpose in his art. In this restricted sense Bergson's God may be purposive, and therefore personal. While such a view of God is considerably below the Christian view in splendor, power and wisdom, yet possibly it puts God a little more in touch with humanity. It is a little difficult to relate ourselves to an absolute God. We feel more at home with one who has been "tempted in all points like as we are;" who has tried and failed, who has suffered disappointment, who has been compelled to tack and try another course. When we read "It repented him" we feel a little more closely related to God. If the world, as it is today, is the result of the toil and persistence, the patience and hope of the great Experimenter, rather than the doubtful product of an Omnipotent Hand, a little light would be let in on the mystery. The Evil of the world snapping its fingers in the face of its Omnipotent Creator is a hard test for the reasoning power of the average mind.

Another age-long antinomy that would practically disappear under such a doctrine of God is that of God's absolutism and man's freedom. With an absolute God Calvinism is the only logical doctrine of salvation. But because predestination and a limited

atonement is abhorrent to the reason, we have tried to gloss over the harshness of the Calvinistic creed, but with little logical success. As long as we hold to an absolute God with a definite purpose, we will have difficulty with the question of man's freedom. As long as man questions his freedom in the least degree there will be a shadow on his life, and a limit to the optimism so necessary to life's fulness and power. Man could not have attained his present moral and spiritual status had not his life been greater than his theory. But it were better that his logical theory, instead of impeding his soul, become its inspiration, its hope, its ideal. The Christian world is not ready to incorporate into its theology the doctrine of a developing, experimenting God. It will be slow to revolutionize its theology at any point, for theology, when once crystallized in human thought, becomes almost impregnable to change. But if Bergson in his philosophy has constituted a God who is a little more comprehensible to the human intellect, and whose experiences are a little more closely related to the experiences of humanity, that philosophy is not wholly unrelated to Christian thought and life. For the author of such a doctrine grappling with the real problems of the universe will have "let in a ray of light, in the beneficent beams of which many things are sure to grow and fructify."

Bergson's discussion of Intelligence and Instinct has a bearing on the problems of Christianity. Intellectualism has cast many obstacles in the path of Christianity, and has impeded the progress of spiritual life. Bergson refuses to permit the intellect to lord

it over the soul, but gives to instinct a position of authority in the realm of reality. Intellectualism has been a prolific source of confusion to earnest souls. Ever since Zeno put forth his logic-story of Achilles and the tortoise logic has reflected on the facts of experience. If experience does not co-incide with logic, then experience is wrong and but a delusion, for logic, of course, is supreme. Even if Achilles did appear to overtake the tortoise he did not do so in fact, for it was a logical impossibility for him to do so. If impulse, motive, desire, spiritual consciousness were without logical foundation or support, then they were without value for life. Such intellectual domination has not been good for the soul, it has hampered man's highest aspirations, it has chilled his spiritual fervor and broken down the supports of his faith. Bergson would condition this absolutism of the intellect by limiting the field of its operations, and at the same time would give validity to the decrees, or the dictates, of instinct. He begins his attack on intellectualism by criticising it fundamentally. He says that "the cardinal error which, from Aristotle onwards, has vitiated most of the philosophies of nature, is to see in vegetative, instinctive and rational life, three successive degrees of the development of one and the same tendency, whereas, they are three divergent directions of an activity that has split up as it grew. The difference between them is not a difference of intensity, nor, more generally, of degree, but of kind." The original distinction between man and the lower animals was the making and use of tools. We push

back the beginnings of the life of man to the earliest age in which implements or manufactured tools are found. "Intelligence" says Bergson, "considered in what seems to be its original features, is the faculty of manufacturing artificial objects, especially tools to make tools, and of indefinitely varying the manufacture." The use of instruments is not altogether unknown among lower animals, but such instruments are organized, natural, and not manufactured, while man manufactures his instruments. The perfected instinct is the faculty of using organized instruments, intelligence perfected is the faculty of making and using unorganized instruments. His inference is that "Instinct and intelligence represent two divergent solutions of one and the same problem." Continuing the argument he finds that intelligence in its beginning had for its chief object the unorganized solid, and that of the discontinuous only does it form a clear idea; unable to grasp change, becoming, infinite divisibility, it simply blocks out of space the matter which it can use. Its field is matter, it is at home with solids, its method is geometrical. But when applied to movement in space and in time, to becoming, to change, to spirit, intellect becomes confused and loses its way. "The intellect is characterized by a natural inability to comprehend life."

The instinct, on the contrary, is directly in touch with life; In fact, so closely is instinct related to life that it is scarcely possible to distinguish where life's organic processes cease and instinct begins. The little chick which breaks its shell with a

peck of its beak does so by instinct, but it is merely carrying on the movement which has borne it through embryonic life. Or, take the cells of the living body, all working to the common end--the body's welfare, each separately preserving itself, defending itself, feeding itself, reproducing itself; acting as if possessed of instinct, but only performing its natural function. Now compare this to the bees within a hive, each acting for the common welfare and unable to live apart from the others, yet each performing its function of building, providing, defending, doing by instinct what the cell does organically. Here life and instinct are so closely identified as to be indistinguishable.

By a variety of illustrations and deductions Bergson shows that the realm of instinct is life, and that instinct has remained there, while intelligence, formerly at one with instinct, has stepped out of its original bounds and has become absorbed in the utilization of inert matter. This divergent and dissimilar development has made it impossible for intelligence to reabsorb instinct or to perform the functions of instinct. "That which is instinctive in instinct cannot be expressed in terms of intelligence, nor, consequently, can it be analyzed," for intelligence and instinct are turned in opposite directions, the former towards inert matter, the latter towards life. Intelligence works by conceptual logic, its method is scientific. "It goes all around life, taking from the outside the greatest possible number of views of it, drawing it into itself instead of entering into it. But it is to the very inward-

ness of life" that instinct leads us. In man instinct has become something more than in the lower forms of life. Through the push of the intellect instinct has become "self-conscious and capable of reflecting upon its object and of enlarging it indefinitely," and is called intuition. "Without intelligence it would have remained in the form of instinct, riveted to the special object of its practical interest, and turned outward by it into movements of locomotion." Yet it transcends intellect, insinuating itself into the very domain of life, which the intellect cannot do.

Briefly stated, the difference between Bergson's evolution and the ordinary view is that while the old view regarded evolution as in a straight line through organic matter, vegetable matter, animal instinct and human reason, with reason at the top and in absolute authority, the Bergson view is that the creative force, running through matter, has split up and evolved through three distinct lines, vegetative, instinctive and rational, and that the instinctive has life as its domain, while the rational has matter as its domain, and each is authoritative in its own field. Bergson's view gives to instinct, or intuition, a standing that it has never enjoyed, and never could enjoy, under the old view, and gives validity to some important religious and Christian doctrines that lie outside the possibility of logical demonstration.

The Christian doctrine of God has always been a stumbling block to the intellectualist, who must have everything proved by intellectual processes before accepting it. This was the difficulty of the positivist; the doctrine of the Unknown and the Unknowable grew

out of the same view; and the atheist scoffed at the idea of a God who had wholly escaped the senses, and had never formed the conclusion of a bona fide syllogism. Of course this intellectualistic attitude toward God has not prevented millions of human beings from accepting the doctrine of God and enjoying the blessings of their faith. But such faith has been held in defiance of intellectualism, with its root and ground in experience rather than in reason. Out of this situation grew the so-called conflict between religion and science, which could never have arisen had the philosophy of Bergson prevailed; for religion grows out of the emotions and passions and needs of life, which is the domain of the intuition, and not out of the intellect whose domain is science and matter. Religion is a feeling, an experience, a life, and not an intellectual process. If we feel God, if we experience God, if we live God, we have a ground for our doctrine of God that is as authoritative, or more so, than if God were the necessary conclusion of a logical process; for he is a necessity to that sympathetic understanding which we call intuition, and which, according to Bergson, is authoritative in life.

Or take the question of immortality: We cannot prove that the soul is immortal. There are many arguments advanced in favor of the doctrine. There is the biological argument, the argument from the nature of the soul, the ethical, the Biblical argument, and many other arguments for the soul's immortality. But each and all of them fall short of proof. And as no argument has ever been

vanced that is equivalent to a demonstration the intellectualist would say that we cannot accept the doctrine. But intuitively we feel that we are destined to live. The idea of immortality is practically universal to the human race. It is not always in the same form, but it always appears in some form. Likewise the desire for immortality is general in mankind. It is evident that both idea and desire are germinal in the life of man. If that is true, then, Bergson would hold that the doctrine is about as well established as if it were logically proved to the understanding, for it is the voice of instinct heard in the soul. The value of the doctrine of immortality for human life is incalculable. The Christian faith lives or dies with the belief in immortality. Says Paul of the value of this faith: "If Christ be not risen from the dead we are of all men most miserable." Haeckel, the materialist, dissents on this point, and says: "The abandonment of the hope of a future would involve no painful loss, but would be an inestimable benefit for humanity." Of the men who have gained any standing in the world of thought Haeckel stands quite alone on this point. The great materialists as a rule have recognized the value of the doctrine of immortality for the life of the present. Seeley, author of "Ecce Homo" and "Natural Religion", the latter work written to disprove the resurrection of Christ, says, "We may well doubt whether the natural, the material, can suffice for human life. No sooner do we try to think so--no sooner do we try to get rid of the idea of immortality--than Pessimism raises its head.***** The whole moral world is reduced to a point. good and evil, right and

wrong, become infinitesimal, ephemeral matters. The affections die away--die of their own conscious feebleness and uselessness. A moral paralysis creeps over us." Renan, who doubted immortality, says concerning its value for life, "The day in which the belief in an after life shall vanish from the earth will witness a terrific moral and spiritual decadence. Some of us might perhaps do without it, provided only that others held it fast. But there is no lever capable of raising an entire people, if they once have lost their faith in the immortality of the soul." Romanes, in the interval between losing and regaining his faith, wrote these pathetic words: "It is with the utmost sorrow that I find myself obliged to accept the conclusions here worked out. I am not ashamed to confess that the universe has lost for me its soul of loveliness; and when at times I think, as think I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed creed that once was mine and the lonely negation of existence as I now find it, it will never be possible for me to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible."

If this is what a lost faith in a future life means to such men as these, what would it mean to the multitudes who live on a lower moral and intellectual level than these? Could it mean less than the loss of all moral incentive, of all rational grounds of self-sacrifice, and consequently a tremendous depreciation of life's values? Could it mean less than the inevitable decline of civilization and the relapse into barbarism? Any philosophy, any system of thought, that strengthens the faith of humanity in the doctrine of immortality, renders to humanity an inestimable service

and allies itself with the forces of Christianity. In giving validity to the impressions of the intuition Bergson has rendered such a service. Listening to the voice of intuition as it speaks forth the needs of the soul, and as it directs our vision to unexplored realms of possibility, life becomes much more hopeful and optimistic, and life's achievements far greater than could be possible under the regime of a hard and fast intellectualism.

There is another doctrine of Bergson's that will give impetus to Christian ideals: It is his doctrine of creative freedom. There are two leading theories of creation--the mechanical and the finalistic. The mechanical theory, of course, admits of no freedom whatever. It is a fixed and rigid system. Things, events, experiences are ground out of necessity, and there is no place for choice in the universe. Finalism, or the teleological theory, according to which things and beings merely realize a purpose or a plan previously conceived, is, on its practical side, little better than the mechanical theory, the difference being that in the former we are pushed and in the latter we are led. In neither case is there any real freedom, and therefore no real creation. Bergson opposes both mechanism and finalism, and affirms the absolute freedom of creative effort. He opposes that view, whether mechanical or teleological, which regards the world as a closed system. He challenges the statement of Ecclesiasticus that there is nothing new under the sun, and takes his stand with Paul, who says, "old things have passed away; behold, they are become new," and with Christ, who says, "Behold, I make all things new." God is unceasing life, action, free-

dom, radiating his creative power until it permeates and vitalizes and refreshes all things. This creative power, carrying with it all its past experience, crowding into the future that is open and free, creates new life, new hopes, new worlds, destined to triumph ultimately over all evil and all opposition, and to attain unto perfect self-realization.

This is a philosophy of joyous optimism, for it sets at liberty a creative movement that presses forward with irresistible power; and all imperfection, even that which seems rooted in the very nature of things, must sometime yield place to the advancing tide of creative evolution. There is a philosophy that is less hopeful and more fatalistic, a philosophy that sees necessity in things as they are: Red-handed war, the evil that has deluged the world in blood, and sacrificed the flower of humanity to the savage gods of greed and power, has always existed and of course it is folly to talk of courts of arbitration or of universal peace; pauperism, the scourge of human life, lays its withering hand upon multitudes of hapless human beings, creating the slum, crushing hope, denying opportunity, shackling genius, and because it has ever existed it will always exist; sin, even in its baser forms, can never be eradicated from life, because it has too firm a grip upon the human heart, and will inevitably continue to corrupt and blight and defile the soul, and impede the progress of social virtue.

Such fatalism, such resignation stifles human aspiration, paralyzes human effort, and issues in stoicism or despair. Against all this the philosophy of Bergson is a strong defense, for it is

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a philosophy of freedom, it is a philosophy of spirituality, and conceives the soul of the universe as a mighty current of free spiritual power, rushing through all things, freely creating all things new. And according to the mighty working of this power, war must cease, pauperism and poverty must disappear, sin must loosen its grip, and the soul, shaking itself free of all impediment, shall realize the meaning of the promises: "He shall guide you into all truth", "and the truth shall make you free."

and the following to Bishop John Day. It purports to have been written by one of his clerks, and contains a number of corrections, and it is dated 17th of June 1600. It is signed "John Day Bishop of Bristol". The signature is very like that of the signature on the first page of the book, and it is also very like the signature on the title page of the book. The signature on the title page is very like the signature on the first page of the book.

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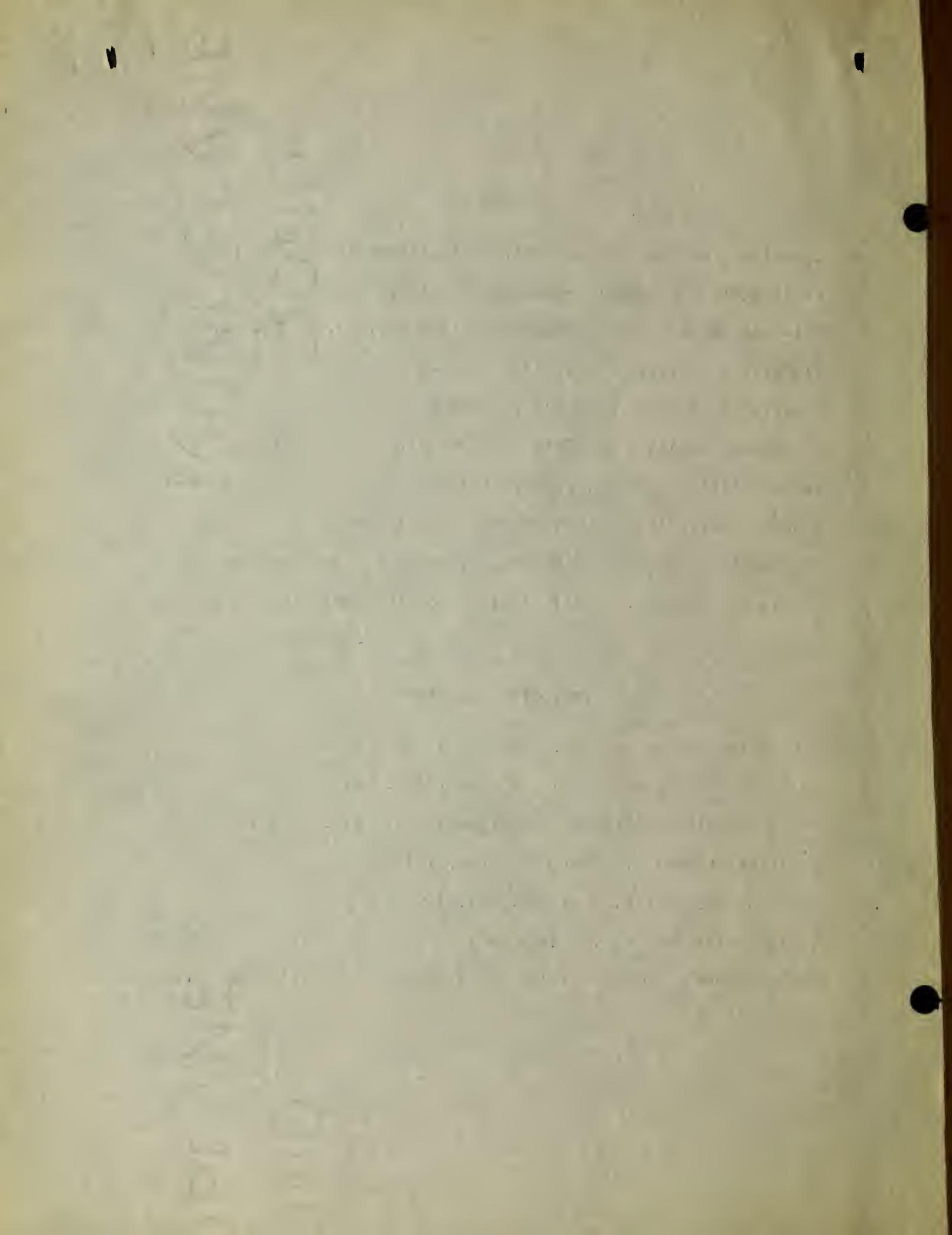
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